CLAIMS

We claim:

1.   A computer-implemented method for managing mortgage broker workflow, comprising:

receiving a loan application;

generating an indication of at least one document required to approve the loan application;

electronically receiving the at least one document;

storing the at least one document;

providing access to the at least one documents;

electronically underwriting the at least one document; and

in response to electronically underwriting the at least one document, electronically approving the loan application.

2.   The method of claim 1, further comprising:

generating an indication of a second document required to approve the loan application; and

at least beginning the operation of electronically underwriting the at least one document prior to receiving the second document.

3.   The method of claim 2, further comprising the operation of:

in response to electronically approving the loan application, electronically submitting the loan application to an investor.

4.   The method of claim 3, further comprising the operation of automatically recognizing a category for the at least one document.

5.   The method of claim 3, wherein the operation of electronically underwriting the at least one document comprises:

        determining at least one administrative rule for the at least one document; and

        satisfying the at least one administrative rule.

6.   The method of claim 5, wherein the operation of determining at least one administrative rule for the at least one document comprises:

        determining an approval category for the loan application; and

        in response to determining an approval category for the loan application, choosing an administrative rule for the at least one document corresponding to the approval category.

7.   The method of claim 5, wherein the operation of determining at least one administrative rule for the at least one document comprises determining an administrative rule for the at least one document corresponding to the investor.

8.   The method of claim 1, further comprising the operation of:

        in response to generating an indication of at least one document required to approve the loan application, automatically requesting the at least one document.

9.   The method of claim 8, wherein the operation of electronically underwriting the at least one document comprises:

in response to storing the at least one document, automatically initially

underwriting the at least one document to generate an initially underwritten document.

10.   A computer-implemented apparatus for electronically managing and

approving a loan application, comprising:

a plurality of modules comprising:

a document administration module;

a loan officer module;

an underwriting module; and

an administration module; wherein

each of the modules is operably connected to one another;

at least one of the modules operates on a document associated with the loan

application; and

the plurality of the modules may simultaneously operate on the loan

application.

11.   The apparatus of claim 10, wherein a plurality of the modules may

simultaneously operate on the loan application.

12.   The apparatus of claim 10, wherein the document administration module

electronically receives and stores the document.

13.   The apparatus of claim 12, wherein the administration module creates at least

one document administrative rule applying to the document.

14.   The apparatus of claim 11, wherein the document administration module

controls an electronic submission of the loan application to an investor.

15.   The apparatus of claim 14, wherein the administration module creates at least

one investor administrative rule applying to the investor.

16.   The apparatus of claim 15, wherein the at least one investor administrative

rule is a sub-setting of a loan approval category.

17.   The apparatus of claim 16, wherein:

a plurality of documents are associated with the loan approval category; and

the sub-setting is associated with at least a portion of the plurality of

documents, but not an entirety of the plurality of documents.

18.   The apparatus of claim 10, wherein:

the plurality of modules further comprises a quality control module operable

on the document; and

the quality control module must approve the loan application prior to a final

approval of the loan application.

19.   The apparatus of claim 15, wherein:

the plurality of modules further comprises a processor module operable on the

document;

the at least one administrative rule is a document approval criterion;

the processor module may satisfy the document approval criterion, thereby approving the document.

20.   The apparatus of claim 19, further comprising a scoreboard displaying a loan datum for each loan initiated within a given timeframe, the loan datum generated by one of the plurality of modules.

21.   A method for approving a loan, comprising:

receiving a loan application in electronic format;

receiving at least one document associated with the loan application in electronic format;

communicating the receipt of the document to a plurality of modules;

updating a status associated with the document;

communicating the update of the status associated with the document to the plurality of modules; and

in response to communicating the update of the status associated with the document to the plurality of modules, dispositioning the loan application.

22.   The method of claim 21, wherein the step of dispositioning the loan application comprises approving the loan application.

23.   The method of claim 21, wherein the step of dispositioning the loan application comprises declining the loan application.

24.   The method of claim 21, wherein the step of communicating the receipt of the document to a plurality of modules comprises:

storing the document in a folder; and

in response to storing the document in a folder, updating at least one status entry in at least one table.

25.   The method of claim 24, wherein the at least one table may be accessed by the plurality of modules.

26.   The method of claim 24, further comprising the operations of:

operating on the loan application with a first of the plurality of modules; and

operating on the loan application with a second of the plurality of modules;

wherein

the first and second modules operate simultaneously on the loan application.

27.   The method of claim 26, wherein the first module is an underwriter module and the second module is a loan officer module.

28.   The method of claim 21, further comprising the operations of:

identifying a second document associated with the loan application;

creating an electronic file associated with the second document;

in response to creating the electronic file associated with the second document, determining whether the second document is present; and

in response to determining the second document is not present, automatically ordering the second document from a third party.

29.   The method of claim 28, further comprising the operations:

receiving the second document from the third party;

recognizing at least one identifier associated with the second document; and

in response to recognizing at least one identifier associated with the second

document, placing the second document in the electronic file associated with the second

document.